

Natural Beef Marketing Project

Location of Project: Medina, New York (Northeast Region)

Purpose: The goal of the project was to develop a local natural beef product in the upstate New York region through a marketing alliance, which would market this niche product in local area supermarkets. The focus of the project was the promotion of source-verified natural beef by exposing consumers to the product through supermarket sampling and advertising.

Accomplishments: A natural beef product line was introduced to area stores and markets. While distribution was limited to a handful of stores, the supermarket buyers that were involved in the product promotion reacted very favorably to the new items and the sampling program was fully supported by participating stores.

Lessons Learned: While there was a great deal of interest in the product, the packaging of the product was not up to the professional standards to which retail buyers were accustomed. A major problem was the fact that the processing plant that was purchased to produce

premium natural beef contained outdated equipment.

Consequently, the marketing alliance was unable to offer satisfactory packaging to its customers, and it was unclear what direction could be taken by the marketing alliance to alleviate the problem, given the available infrastructure.

Conclusion:

The primary goal of finding a retail market for locally-produced natural beef products was accomplished by attracting farmers to the idea of retailing directly to consumers. However, more professional packaging is needed in order to compete successfully for the retail customer.